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GAY'S CHAIR.

46620

Poems,

NEVER BEFORE PRINTED,

WRITTEN BY

JOHN GAY,

AUTHOR OF THE BEGGAR'S OPERA, FABLES, &c.

WITH

A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE,

FROM THE MSS. OF

THE REV. JOSEPH BALLER,

HIS NEPHEW.

EDITED BY HENRY LEE,

AUTHOR OF "POLITIC IMPRESSIONS, CALEB QUOTEM, &c.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

Two New Tales,

THE WORLD, AND GOSSIP,

BY THE EDITOR.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,

PATERNOSTER ROW.

1820.

46620.

Preface.

As the Reader will very naturally expect some account of the CHAIR from which the present volume derives its title, the Editor presumes that a plain narrative of facts will best answer the purpose.

Many of the most respectable inhabitants of Barnstaple and its vicinity remember having often seen this Chair, several years ago, while it was in the possession of Mr. immediate descendants, who always spoke of it as having been the property of the Poet, and which, as his favorite Easy Chair, he highly valued.

Its identity cannot be well mistaken, from the peculiarity of its shape, its antique appearance, and curious construction; forming, with its conveniently attached apparatus for writing and reading, in every respect a complete student's Chair.

About twelve years since, it was sold amongst some of the effects of the late Mrs. WILLIAMS, niece of the Rev. JOSEPH BALLER, and who by a previous marriage had been the wife of the Rev. HUGH FORTESCUE of Filleigh, near Barnstaple. Both families (the FORTESCUES and the BALLERS) were by marriage nearly related to GAY, whose property was, at his decease (as will afterwards be shown), equally divided betwixt his sisters, KATHERINE BALLER and JOANNA FORTESCUE.

Since the period of Mrs. Williams's death, the Chair came into the hands of the late Mr. Clarke, of High-street, Barnstaple, and it was sold, with the rest of his household furniture, by public auction. The Editor happening

o be then in Devonshire, heard of the above circumstance, nd anxious to ascertain the particulars, applied to the auctioneer, who informed him that the Chair had been sold to a person of the name of Symonds, to whom the Editor immediately went, saw the Chair, and afterwards purchased it: orders were given that it should be sent to the house of Mr. Crook, a cabinet maker in the same street, to be repaired; who, on removing the [illegible] discovered the manuscripts from which the principal articles of this publication are taken.

The following extract from Mr. Crook's letter to a Gentleman who made enquiries on the subject, will it is presumed, be satisfactory.——"The Chair was "bought at an auction by Mr. Symonds of this town "from whose house it came to mine. I was desired "repair it, and on taking out the drawer in front, w "was somewhat broken, I found at the back part "Chair, a *concealed drawer*, ingeniously fastened "small wooden bolt. Those who have lately had

"of the Chair never knew of this concealed drawer: it
"was full of manuscript papers, some of which appeared
"to have slipped over, as I found them stuck in the
"bottom or seat of the Chair.—A respectable tradesman
"of this town was present when I made the discovery.
"The owner of the Chair was immediately sent for,
"and the whole of the papers safely delivered into his
[redacted]

"I am, Sir, your humble servant,

"RICHARD CROOK,

"March 21st, 1819." "Cabinet-maker, Barnstaple.

That the Chair originally belonged to GAY there is not the least doubt: the fact is admitted by all the best informed persons in the neighbourhood, who have paid attention to the subject.

[redacted]AVELL, the Rev. WM. SPURWAY, and others, having seen it several years ago, and believe it to the Poet's property.

Dr. COPPLESTON, Provost of Oriel College, Oxford, (whose mother was a GAY, and nearly related to our Author) is not totally unacquainted with some circumstances respecting the Chair; having been informed on the subject by his friend, N. V. LEE, Esq. of Ilfracombe, who very well remembers, that, when a boy, it was pointed out to him by GAY's relatives, at Barnstaple.

To Capt. WILLIAMS of Newport, the Editor is particularly obliged for many valuable communications: and his grateful thanks are also due to T. HOGG BALLER, Esq. of Bideford, who, among other remarks, has been pleased to write thus:—"The Chair was most certainly GAY's: "I have heard both my Grandfather and my great Aunt "often mention it: my Grandfather used frequently to "say, in a familiar manner, *My Uncle Gay's Chair*."

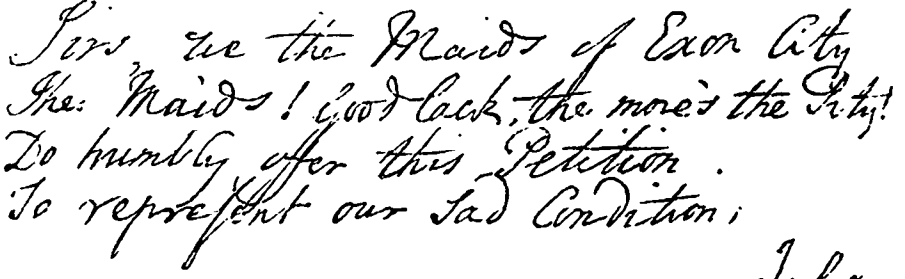
The Grandfather here alluded to was the Rev. J. BALLER, already mentioned, who, during the last of his life resided at Barnstaple. He being

related to the Poet, was doubtless well acquainted with whatever concerned him.

Amongst the documents and relics of GAY and his family, which the Editor has become possessed of, (and which may, at some future time, be more particularly noticed) is a small curiously carved wooden box, of about five inches diameter; when opened, there appears in the centre, a compartment secured by a screw lid, round which is a depository for cash:—it is said to have been GAY's *money box.*

A *Poet's* money box may perhaps be considered a great curiosity; but the Reader will not be surprised, when he is informed that it was found—*empty!!!*

FAC-SIMILE OF GAY'S HAND WRITING.


Sirs, we the Maids of Exon City
The Maids! Good Lack, the more's the Pity!
Do humbly offer this Petition.
To represent our Sad Condition;
J. Gay

The following Memoir is taken from one of the Manuscripts in the possession of the Editor.

Memoir,

WRITTEN BY THE REV. JOSEPH BALLER,

Gay's Nephew.

THE County of Devon has been rendered famous by giving birth to many eminent characters, particularly to the celebrated poet Mr. JOHN GAY, a gentleman of great wit and humour, whose writings are read by all lovers of true taste and genius, and which in all probability will continue to entertain the world, and hand down his name to the latest posterity.

He was born in Barnstaple, in the year 1688, and was the youngest child of Mr. WILLIAM GAY, the second son of JOHN GAY, Esq. of Frithelstock,* near Great Torrington, of an ancient and worthy family; who had been resident in this county several centuries. He [the subject of this Memoir] with his elder brother JONATHAN and two sisters, were left orphans very early in life: their father and mother both dying in or about the year 1694. The elder brother

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* *Gay*'s Biographers have differed as to the place of his birth: Some of them have named *Exeter*; others have said that he was born "*in* or *near* Barnstaple;" but *Mr. Baller* (certainly the best authority) says positively *Barnstaple*, which is sufficient to set the matter at rest.—*Goldworthy* has also been named as the family residence, though *Drs. Johnson* and *Lamprière* seem to doubt there being such a place: on enquiry, however, it appears there is, near Bideford, a spot so called; but no trace can be there found of *Gay*'s family, and the manuscript is silent on the subject:—*Frithelstock* was doubtless the family residence, and there is still living there, a lady of the name of *Gay*, distantly related to the poet. *Ed.*

JONATHAN inheriting the paternal estate, the youngest children were left possessed of but moderate fortunes.

JONATHAN being intended for the Church, received the rudiments of a liberal education. He soon attained a considerable proficiency in most of the branches of polite literature; but severe studies not well suiting his natural genius, he betook himself to military pursuits. Being a brave and gallant officer, his advancement was rapid.* He served under the late DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH in several battles: particularly that of Hochsten, where he was placed in a very dangerous situation, most of his company being killed, himself very narrowly escaped, but not without a ball grazing his side, the mark of which he carried to his grave, which was an early one. A misunderstanding having arisen between him and his Colonel, he met with

* The Editor is in possession of three different commissions: the first appointing *Jonathan Gay* an Ensign; the second, a Lieutenant and the third, a Captain. The first is dated at the *Hague*, the second at *Cologn*, and both signed "*Marlborough*," then Master of the English Forces on the Continent: the third commission is dated at *Kensington*; and the signature, "*Anne R.*" is the writing of her Majesty.

some mortifications, which his high spirit could not well put up with; this, with his former arduous services, soon threw him into a decline, which put a period to his life, in the year 1709, at the age of 31. At the time of his death there was due to him, for his pay, and for the enlistment of recruits, about £300, which his executors, after many applications, were never able to recover.

But to return to our Poet, Mr. JOHN GAY, the principally intended subject of this account.

While a boy he resided with his mother at a house the corner of Joy-Street, facing Holland-Street, in Barnstaple; and became a pupil to Mr. RAYNER,* master of the

* The *Rev. Charles Hill*, Rector of Instow, addresses the Editor thus:—"Dear Sir, I knew a gentleman that had been *Gay*'s school-"fellow, who informed me that his first poetical effort was in conse-"quence of one of his playmates shooting a swallow in Barnstaple "church yard." *Mr. Hill* jocosely adds,—"I almost envy you, my "good Sir, the possession of *Gay*'s Chair; I have frequently sat in it, "and always considered it a luxurious treat!—There never was "wented a more excellent Chair for assisting a poet's con-"plation."

Grammar School, who shortly after removed to Tiverton, and his place was supplied by Mr. ROBERT LUCK, under whose tuition GAY continued some time, and made considerable progress.*

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* After *Gay*'s death, *Mr. Luck* published a volume of poems, dedicated to His Grace the *Duke of Queensberry*, in which are the following lines:

"O Queensberry! could happy *Gay*
"This offering to thee bring;
"'Tis his, [illegible]y Lord, (he'd smiling say)
"Who taught your *Gay* to sing."

'Tis highly probable that *Gay* imbibed also his dramatic turn from this source: *Mr. Luck*'s pupils were in the habit of performing plays at stated seasons:—The Editor has in his possession several copies of verses (some of them in latin), which were recited on these occasions, with prologues and epilogues that were spoken by the scholars; but whether young *Gay* was the author of any of them, or ever exhibited his talent this way, is quite uncertain. *Ed*

At this school Mr. GAY contracted an intimate friendship with WILLIAM FORTESCUE, Esq. (who became Master of the Rolls, and afterwards a Judge) which friendship, as is frequently the case with friendships contracted in youth, subsisted during their lives.*

When he left school, he was, by the advice of his relatives, bound apprentice to a mercer in London.§ Young GAY, not being able to bear the confinement of a shop, soon felt a remarkable depression of spirits, and consequent decline of health; he was therefore obliged to quit that situation, and retire to Barnstaple, in the hope of receiving benefit from his native air. Here he was

* Those who have read the celebrated Letters written by *Pope* and *Gay*, may recollect the frequent mention of their mutual friend *Fortescue*. *Ed.*

§ About this time, he sent one of his productions for insertion in the *Tatler*, and which *Sir Richard Steele* noticed so handsomely as encouraged him to proceed. *Gay* afterwards wrote several articles for the Spectator, Guardian, &c. *Ed.*

kindly received at the house of his uncle, his mother's brother, the Reverend JOHN HANMER, the nonconformist minister of that town.* After continuing some months in Barnstaple, his health became reinstated, upon which he returned to London, where he lived for some time as a private gentleman. But his natural genius for poetry soon developed itself in various publications. The *Rural Sports*, the *Fan*, *Pastorals*, and the *Shepherd's Week*, were universally read and admired. These introduced him to the acquaintance of several great men, and to the most eminent wits and poets of the age, of true taste and polite literature, such as ADDISON, SIR RICHARD STEELE, DEAN PURCELL, SWIFT, POPE, and many others.

Towards the termination of the reign of QUEEN ANNE, he possessed a very high share of popularity, and was intimate with several who were in the Ministry; it is therefore highly probable, that these circumstances were

* See Palmer's Nonconformist's Memorial, vol. 1.

the cause of his being treated with coolness and indifference during the succeeding reign; but such treatment of him was considered unjust, as he never entered into any of the parties or cabals of ANNE's Ministry; and as a proof of his loyalty and attachment to the House of Hanover, he was honoured with being Secretary to the EARL OF CLARENDON, who was sent as Ambassador to Hanover, to notify to the Elector (who was afterwards GEORGE THE FIRST) the death of QUEEN ANNE. About that time he wrote his Epistle to a Lady, dedicated to the then PRINCESS OF WALES, to congratulate her, and to wish her a safe passage to England.

About the beginning of the reign of George the Second, that celebrated dramatic work, *The Beggar's Opera*, was first performed, and which, though it proved very advantageous to Mr. RICH, the Manager of Covent Garden Theatre, was sold by the Author to a Bookseller, at a very moderate price. In this work he is pretty severe upon courtiers; and though the minister, SIR ROBERT WALPOLE, appeared publicly to applaud the satire of the piece, yet

soon after, to show his resentment to the Author, he took from him his apartments in Whitehall, where he [Mr. GAY] had lodged for several years, and which apartments had been granted him by the Right Honorable the EARL of LINCOLN.

When the Sequel to the Beggar's Opera, under the title of "*Polly*," was offered to the stage, the Lord Chamberlain forbade its appearance; the Author then published it by subscription, and several of his noble friends, particularly the DUKE and DUTCHESS of QUEENSBERRY, encouraged the undertaking; upon which the DUTCHESS was forbade the court; and the DUKE, in consequence, resigned a considerable employment. The DUKE immediately invited GAY to reside at his house in Burlington Gardens, where he had a suite of rooms allotted him.

His satire was never personal, though in the latter part of his life he wrote with more asperity against the Great, than was natural to his usual affability and evenness of temper. His honest soul was often roused with indignation against the growth of that venality and corruption,

which he feared might ultimately prove the ruin of his country*.

In his severest remarks upon the vices and follies of mankind, he carefully avoided all invective and acrimonious reflections, which are ever productive of more injury than

* Perhaps it may be urged that a state of dependence cannot well accord with either the genius of an author, the wit of a satirist, or the candour and impartiality of a philosopher:—The poet's eye, "in a fine frenzy rolling," is too frequently impeded by the contracted horizon of worldly prudence; satiric wit is blunted by the courtesies of familiar intercourse, and honest indignation at moral obliquity, deadened, if not totally annihilated, by the gratitude emanating from personal obligation.

What *Dr. Johnson* has said of a *patron*, is too well known to be repeated; but in the present instance, as it regards our Author, never did patronage commence, or continue to be exercised, on more exalted principles.—The *Duke* and *Dutchess* of *Queensberry* have immortalized themselves by their munificence. *Gay*'s natural genius was left so completely unshackled, that from this time, with the leisure he acquired, his imagination expanded, and he wrote with greater freedom than ever; for with the unlimited indulgence of his fancy his mind matured, and as his researches grew profound, his opinions became more liberal. This conduct was manifested by the general drift of his writings during the latter period of his life, and more especially by the tenor of his correspondence with his most intimate friends *Dean Swift* and *Mr. Pope*. *Ed.*

good. It was only undeserved honors, luxury, and immorality that he struck at, and left the vicious to make a self-application, and to suffer remorse from their own inward shame, and sense of guilt. He remained quiet and happy in himself, amidst every disappointment, and in the enjoyment of the sincere regards of all his real friends, among whom were Dr. ARBUTHNOT, Mr. POPE, and his noble patrons their Graces the DUKE and DUTCHESS of QUEENSBERRY.—In the autumn of 1732, he retired with the DUKE to his seat at Amesbury, Wiltshire, in the hope of effectually removing the severe disorder which had so long afflicted him.*

* *Gay*, during his whole life, was remarkably subject to complaints arising from indigestion, and 'tis probable that under the influence of this suffering, he composed the two *latter* lines of the song in the Beggar's Opera, where *Mrs. Peachum*, complaining of her daughter's taste for finery, says,

"And when she's dress'd with care and cost,
"All tempting fine and gay,
"As men should serve a *cucumber*,
"She flings herself away."

Dr. Pitcairne has made similar allusions respecting the indigestible qualities of the cucumber. *Ed.*

At this crisis it was his intention to pass some months in Devonshire, and apartments were accordingly prepared for him at a house near Landkey, in the vicinity of Barnstaple,* but his friends were disappointed in their expectations of seeing him. By his going to London in the latter part of November, for the purpose of introducing on the stage his opera of Achilles, his disorder returned with double violence, and, baffling the skill of the most eminent physicians, it put a period to his life, December the 4th, 1732, in the 44th year of his age.—Dying a batchelor, and without a will, his sisters, KATHERINE BALLER † and JOANNA FORTESCUE, became entitled to his effects,

* He had by letters often expressed a wish to pass the rest of his days "in retirement."—It was supposed that his great love of ease had tended to shorten his existence—for his friend *Swift* often rallied him on his indolent habits, though it could not be said of him as was said by *Lord Orrery* of the poet *Fenton*, that "He died "of an easy chair and two bottles of port a day." *Ed.*

† *Dr. Lempriere* and others, have written "*Ballet*," but evidently in mistake. *Ed.*

and soon after they obtained letters of administration to confirm their claim.

A few months prior to his death, Mr. GAY commenced a suit in the court of chancery, against some printers and booksellers, who had published several editions of his Sequel to the Beggar's Opera: this action being quashed by his death, his sisters revived it, under the direction and advice of Counsellor STUCKLEY; — it was afterwards brought to a hearing, and a verdict was obtained in their favor. The booksellers were then glad to compromise the matter, by discharging the full costs, and paying Mr. GAY's sisters a large sum besides; in consideration of which, they [the sisters] conveyed the property of the said Sequel to the Beggar's Opera, and all the remaining copies of it, into the booksellers' hands.

On notice of Mr. GAY's death, his noble patron the DUKE of QUEENSBERRY evinced his regard by going immediately to town, and giving orders that the funeral should be conducted in the most handsome manner, and every

possible respect paid to the memory of his departed friend. —The body was carried from Burlington House to Exeter 'Change in the Strand, on the 23d of December; and after lying in state, was, at nine o'clock that evening, drawn in a hearse, adorned with plumes of white and black feathers and appropriate escutcheons, attended by three coaches, each drawn by six horses. In the first coach was Mr. GAY's nephew* (the only relative then in town), as *chief mourner;* the DUKE of QUEENSBERRY and Dr. ARBUTHNOT next following. The pall was supported by the EARL of CHESTERFIELD, LORD VISCOUNT CORNBURY, the Honorable Mr. BERKELEY, General DORMER, Mr. GORE, and Mr. POPE.

The burial service was performed by the Dean (Dr. WILCOX, Bishop of Rochester), the Choir attending. His remains were deposited in the south cross aisle of Westminster Abbey, over against Chaucer's tomb, and a monument was soon after erected to his memory.

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* *Mr. Joseph Baller*, the writer of this account. *Ed.*

Mr. GAY dying intestate, his whole effects, amounting to about £6,000,* were equally divided between his sisters, KATHERINE BALLER and JOANNA FORTESCUE.

Mr. BALLER, from whose manuscript this is compiled, concludes with these words: — "I, the elder son of "Mr. GAY's oldest sister KATHERINE BALLER, have drawn "up this Memoir, both from my own knowledge, and "from what I have at different times heard from my "beloved mother.

J. B."

* *Drs. Johnson, Lempriere,* and others, have written £3,000,— whereas *Mr. Baller* (the best authority) says 6,000, viz. 3,000 each. Some years afterwards they had also the profits of a benefit from the theatre.

OBSERVATION.

Dr. WAVELL, of Horwood, near Barnstaple, has favored the Editor with the perusal of several books that once formed a part of our Poet's library, among which is a small volume of *Sir John Denham's* works: on the margin of a leaf, at the commencement of the poem of "Cooper's Hill," is a written remark, that may be considered not unimportant. The following is as close a copy of it as can be conveniently given.

"*It has been said by some, yt this poem was wrote by a country*
"*parson w^o had found much favour from Sr Jo^n Denham.—*
"*Mr Jos: Howe of Trin: Coll: Oxon knew both persons & y^e*
"*truth of yt report.*"

This remark is in the hand-writing of *Gay*, and that renders it worthy of the Reader's notice, is, that *Cooper's Hill* has always been supposed the work of *Sir John Denham;* and the only poem that ever gained him much

reputation —*Dr. Johnson* speaks highly of it, and observes that it gave rise to a new species of composition, which may be denominated *local poetry*. *Mr. Pope*, in his *Essay on Criticism*, says "Denham's strength!" and, on another occasion, with complimentary reference to *Cooper's Hill*, he most emphatically writes—"Majestic Denham!"

Now, if any credit be due to the above remark (unquestionably in the hand-writing of Gay), it becomes a matter of doubt whether Sir John Denham or the "Country Parson," was the real author of *Cooper's Hill*; a subject that the lovers of literature may possibly deem worth further enquiry.

DESCRIPTION.

UNDER the arms of the Chair are drawers, with the necessary implements for writing; each drawer turns on a pivot, and has attached to it a brass candlestick.

The wooden leaf for reading or writing upon, may be raised or depressed, or entirely let down, at the student's pleasure.

Under the seat is a drawer for books or paper, and behind it is the *concealed drawer*, in which were found the manuscripts: it is curiously fastened by a small bolt, not perceivable till the larger drawer is removed.

The Chair is made of very fine grained, dark coloured mahogany; the seat, back, and arms stuffed, and covered with brown leather, ornamented with brass nails; the whole, considering its antiquity, in pretty good repair, and (as may be seen from the preceding print) is admirably constructed for meditative ease and literary application.

NOTA BENE.

THE "Ladies' Petition" is printed nearly verbatim from a manuscript in the hand-writing of the poet, and the style is decidedly his. A few alterations have been made, to render the poem more conciliatory to the refined taste of the present day.—The Editor is not aware of its having been before published.

Reasons equally satisfactory cannot perhaps be offered with respect to all the other pieces, yet it may be confidently avowed, that there does not appear any cause to question their authenticity.

The Editor's presumption in adding any attempts of his own, will, he trusts, be pardoned. The public have approved of some of his former effusions, and, while he feels grateful for the liberality he has been honored with, he trusts that the present volume will not be unacceptable.

Owing to the following sheets having been printed in haste, and at a distance from the Editor, a few mistakes have occurred.

At page 78, for *back* read *hack*.
At page 81, for *Cotus* read *Scotus*.

POEMS.

THE LADIES' PETITION

to the

HONORABLE THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

SIRS!

WE, the Maids of Exon City,
The Maids! good lack, the more's the pity!
Do humbly offer this petition,
To represent our sad condition;
Which once made known, our hope and trust is,
Your honored House will do us justice.

But lest our tender sense of wrong,
And volubility of tongue,
Should make us trespass on your leisure,
And speechify it out of measure,
To save our breath, and eke your time,
We clog our fluent speech with rhyme.
First you shall hear—But cann't you guess
The reason of our sad distress?—
(Plague on the Widows that compel us
Thus to petition 'bout young fellows!)
But we were saying—you must know,
Tho' blushing we declare our woe,
A maiden was designed by nature
A weakly and imperfect creature,
So liable to err or stray,
Her wants require a guide, a stay;
And then so timorous of sprites,
She dreads to be alone at nights!

Say what she will, do what she can,
Her heart still gravitates to man;
From whence 'tis evident as light
That marriage is a woman's right;
And therefore 'tis prodigious hard
To be of such a right debarred:
Yet we, poor souls, cann't have the freedom
To get good husbands, tho' we need 'em!
The Widows, Sirs! — Their art denotes
Them *Machiavels* in petticoats!
These plagues, with heads on mischief running,
Exceed by far the fox in cunning!
They cut us out, are still before us,
And leave no lovers to adore us!
'Adore us!' nay, 'tis ten times worse,
Deuce take 'em! (but we should not curse)
For tho' our number is not small,
There's hardly one amongst us all,

Scarce one—'tis true as G—'s in Glo'ster,*
Can get a Strephon to accost her!
No single creature e'er is seen
With bearded chin and manly mien,
But what they have him in a minute!
Well! sure there is some witchcraft in it;
And all the elves are magic pimps
To aid and succour widow imps!
For when, by force of all our wits,
Kind looks, kind words, and fainting fits,
We've brought our beaus just to the lure,
And think the captives are secure—
When the ring glitters in our eye,
The lawyer called, the parson nigh,

---

* This proverb will remind the reader of another—
"Sure as the D—l's in London!" *Ed.*

Up starts a widow in the way,
And disappoints us of the prey;
By some curst hocus pocus trick
The lover leaves us in the nick,
And our confusion to confound,
He's led directly to Lob's pound.*
Besides, what makes it more provoking,
The dames oft wound us by their joking,
Tho' they've a thousand times been told
They need not be so pert and bold;

---

* "*Crowdero*, whom, in irons bound,
"Thou basely threw'st into Lob's pound."
Hudibras.

'Tis evident that in this couplet of Butler's, the stocks or some mean prison is referred to; but in the present text, *Lob's pound* probably alludes to a bondage more dignified. *Ed.*

For could we have the chance to try,
We would be wives, or else know why!
And having welcomed wedlock's boon,
We might be widows, too, and soon!
Thank heaven, we want nor will nor breath
To plague or talk a man to death!
But then the spiteful troop upbraids,
Calling us, sneeringly, old maids!
(The major part of us they mean.)
You well may think it moves our spleen,
When we must suffer such disgraces,
Or, what is worse, display our faces:*
The fair and timid sex esteem'd,
We should about fifteen be deem'd;

* Alluding to the fashion of wearing hoods or veils. *Ed.*

Timid and fair are signs of youth;
The widows cann't deny this truth.
If still they urge we are not young,
However glib or loud the tongue,
'Till we afford 'em more conviction,
E'en let them talk *sans* contradiction!
'Old maids indeed!' for goodness sake
Could they no likelier scandal make?
When time's so much at our devotion,
They could not think to spread the notion.
In spite of registers and nurses,
(Whose blunders well deserve our curses)
Obsequious to a maiden's will,
Old Time turns backward or stands still.
However strange the thing appears,
Some have been twenty, twenty years!
And some that reckon just a score,
Were thirty, ten years since, or more!

Need any person now be told
That single ladies cann't grow old?
We should despise such taunting carriage,
Did we not quite despair of marriage;
Nor about husbands make this fuss,
Were there enough for them and us.
But, tis the truth we represent t'ye,
Men are so scarce, and maids so plenty,
That were each man a maid to wed,
Not one in fifty would be led
To Hymen's shrine, or, during life,
Become that envied thing—a wife.
While thus the widows interlope,
How can we maidens live in hope?
Your honored House will then debate
On our most lamentable state,
And after hearing this as fact,
Will guard our rights by legal act:

For if the widows be allowed
To taunt us thus, and be so proud,
We maidens must embrace the pillow,
Or cut a caper from a willow!
But lest your honors should surmise,
That we, more resolute than wise,
Make 'gainst the widows an invective,
When 'tis ourselves are most defective,
We state, (and thus for favor sue)
That all that can be done, we do;
We plot, devise, try every plan,
To win the fickle creature man;
Contriving, or pursuing schemes,
Not more when waking than in dreams;
At every moment, every place,
Our lures we're throwing with a grace,
In curtsying, smiling, nodding, talking,
In laughing, singing, dancing, walking.

In romping, frowning, ogling, dressing,
And fifty things that want expressing;
At home, abroad, by night, by day,
We various stratagems display.
But sure the most becoming airs
Are those we practise at our prayers!
And therefore nothing can be fitter
Than frequent visits to St. Peter!*
Which every maid more duly pays
Than Canons on refection days.
Ah! Sirs, 'twould do you good to know
The nice demeanour there we show:
And sure such visits are enchanting—
Good company is never wanting!

* The cathedral at Exeter is dedicated to this saint. *Ed.*

The forms too, and the ordinances,
So suited to young ladies' fancies;
For meekness grac'd by pure contrition,
To female beauty gives addition.
While turning round, to crave a blessing,
The figure 's seen, and taste in dressing!
There one may sit, the eye not idle,
Tho' our discretion hold the bridle,
And archly view, behind a fan,
Which is the smartest gentleman;
And while we are his worth attesting,
He soon becomes more interesting,
Claims more respect, more notice shares,
And renders more devout our prayers!
If ever, as 'twill sometimes happen,
One cannot get one's hood or cap on,
So early as to be at church,
We never leave it in the lurch,

But with all possible regard
Wait in the consecrated yard:
Hindered by no profane pretences,
There we discharge our consci-ences!
Away we sail—if rough the weather,
It more directly drives us thither.
What tho' the wind disturb our clothes,
Why should the widows harm suppose?
Surely there can be nothing shocking
In a neat ankle and silk stocking!
If coxcombs pry, and make a fuss,
The blame must lie with them, not us.
So far we trust we do our duty,
In setting off our wit and beauty.
But more, if Nature, on her part,
Leaves us the smallest room for art,
We say, and to our praise 'tis known,
We show more graces than our own;

With stiffened stays, or iron boddices,
We are as finely shaped as goddesses.
If native colours are too faint,
It surely cann't be wrong to paint:
If too reveal'd the lily shows,
What harm to imitate the rose?
A patch that hides a freckled place
May add a beauty to the face;
Then as to faults—admit we've one,
It's name we change—the fault is gone:
For instance, if Miss looks awry,
Ha! Miss has got an ogling eye!
Or if a lengthened heel she want,
Her step's genteel, 'tis elegant!
Yet, Sirs, in spite of all our cares,
Our melting eyes and plaintive airs,
We must allow, when pressed thus far,
Just where we were at first, we are;

All means have failed—all tricks miscarried,
And we, alas! are still unmarried!
Since, then, 'tis not our fault, but fortune,
We take the freedom to importune
Your House will let it be enacted,
That not one widow be contracted,
Or, that it henceforth may be reckon'd,
"Sh..'ned the first who weds a second,"
'Till every maid is in the way
Of wedlock's treat, as well as they.
And yet in case (but heaven avert it!)
A luckless fair should be deserted,
She from that very hour may claim
A widow's privilege and name.
But since we plainly can foresee
The task will not more easy be
To keep the widow'd host from marrying,
Than 'tis to keep the crows from carrion,

We think 'twill be extremely proper,
With all despatch to send a troop here
Of bold gallants to prop our cause,
Our rights maintain, and aid the laws!
But if you find it hard to muster
Of such like beaus sufficient cluster,
Rather than leave a single creature
Of our complacent, modest nature,
To bear the taunts of widow elves,
Take us, we pray you, to yourselves;
For we imagine, and don't flatter,
You will not start at such a matter;
For if 'tis rightly understood,
Our private weal is public good,
And public good the wise ones say,
All real patriots should sway.
Then if you are not dead to beauty,
And know your parliamentary duty,

The question put—divide—and so,
When you say AY, we'll not say NO!
Come—make election—pick and choose,
Welcome to take, but not refuse:
Here all your fancies may be suited,
With real maids and maids reputed.
From these proposals we expect
The best your judgment can effect;
Aid then our wishes—grant the boon,
And, we beseech you, grant it soon.
Old proverbs state, strike while you may,
All men lose something by delay,
And maids in sunshine should make hay:
Grant then this suit, Exonian Spinsters say,
And your petitioners will ever pray.

TO

MISS JANE SCOT.

THE WELCH girl is pretty,
The ENGLISH girl fair,
The IRISH deem'd witty,
The FRENCH *debonnaire*:
Tho' all may invite me,
I'd value them not;
The charms that delight me
I find in a SCOT.

PREDICTION.

DAME Doleful, as old stories say,
Foresaw th' events of every day,
And bore to Satan no relation,
Dealt largely in prognostication:
Whatever accident befel,
She plainly could the cause foretell;
A hundred reasons she could show,
And finish with—"I told you so!"

One day her son (a waggish youth)
Put on the serious face of truth,
And feigning sorrow, to her ran—
He thus his wond'rous tale began:

'Oh mother!—mother!—What d'ye think?
'Letting old Dobbin out to drink,
'Poor beast, he neigh'd, and shook his mane,
'And had such megrims in his brain,
'That I did fear'——Dame stopp'd him short
Before half finished his report:
"Ay, ay; thy mother all forsees—
"Dobbin hath fall'n and broke his knees!
"I knew how 'twas;—I told you so."
In vain her son replied, 'No, no;
'Good mother, listen, hear me out—
'As Dobbin, hungry, smelt about,'——
"Boy, I foresee what thou would'st say,
"Dobbin hath eat—the rick of hay!"
'O worse than that!—He paw'd the ground,
'And snorted, kick'd, and gallop'd round,
'Then, wildly staring, ran to find
'The stone on which our scythes we grind;

'And knaw'd—and knaw'd—ah, woe betide!
'He ope'd his hungry chops so wide,
'And look'd so ravenous, d'ye see,
'I was afraid he'd swallow *me*!—
'At last'——"Ay, ay, I'm not surprised,
"'Tis what I all along surmised,—
"I knew 'twould be—I heard him groan—
"Dobbin hath eat—the GRINDING STONE!"

COMPARISONS.

A Lamb and a Lion—a Fox and an Ass,
Resemble Mankind, as it were in a glass;
Males are harmless as lambs 'till they're fourteen years old,
And 'till they are forty, as lions are bold;
As foxes they're cunning 'till three-score and ten,
Then, silly as asses, no longer are men.

A Dove and a Sparrow—a Parrot and Crow,
The life of a Woman most aptly will show;
Girls innocent doves are 'till fourteen years old,
And chirrup like sparrows, till forty are told;
Like parrots they'll prate 'till they're three-score and ten,
And as crows often croak, so do most old *wo*-MEN!

ABSENCE.

Augustus, frowning, gave command,
And Ovid left his native land;
From Julia, as an exile sent,
He long with barbarous Goths was pent.

So Fortune frown'd on me, and I was driven
From friends, from home, from Jane, and happy Devon!
And Jane sore grieved when from me torn away;—
I loved her sorrow, tho' I wish'd her—Gay!

FABLE.

A milk-white Swan, in Æsop's time,
Had got the knack of making rhyme;
All other birds he did excel;
Wrote verses,—yes,—and wrote them well:
Praised was his genius, and his parts—
All wondered how he reached the arts:
Except some Geese, in neighbouring brook;
Yet even *they* admired his look,
And grudged each feather in his wing;
But, envious, hiss'd whene'er he'd sing!
His sonnets they denounced as *satire*,
His lyric pleasantries, *ill-nature!*

One day these Geese most pertly squall'd,
" Cygnet!"—for so the Swan was call'd—
" Cygnet,—why will you thus abuse
" Our patience with your doggerel muse?
" Not only you offend our ears,
" But you assail our characters!
" Blush, and no longer do amiss."
The critics ended with a hiss.

Erect the Cygnet raised his crest,
And thus the silly Geese address'd:
' I know not any of your tribe—'
' Why, then, d'ye feel my jest or gibe?
' Fools ever—('tis a certain rule)
' Think they're the butts of ridicule;
' As if they so important were,
' No other theme the muse could cheer.

'Begone! you but yourselves expose,
'When thus your folly you disclose:
'Know this, and then your gabbling cease—
'Swans like my verse; but you are—*Geese!*'

CONGRATULATION

TO

A NEWLY MARRIED PAIR.

While artful dames and gay coquettes
Catch fops and fools in cobweb nets;
While giddy girls wed hoary swains,
And barter happiness for gains;
While misers, anxious to be great,
With fortunes take the wives they hate;
Your wiser plan has proved 'tis right
The heart should with the hand unite;

And those who would their joys improve,
Must build their hopes on mutual love.
Whoe'er attend to Reason's voice;
Will thus with prudence make their choice;
On this hinge hangs the chance in life,
Of peace, or war, 'twixt man and wife;
And such as disregard this caution,
May shipwreck'd be on wedlock's ocean.

A DEVONSHIRE HILL.

Oft have shepherds enamoured, in pastoral lays,
Sweetly sung of the grove, grot, or fountain,
No scene that is rural, but loudly it's praise
They have echoed from mountain to mountain.
Some delighted have been with a meadow or vale,
But with these my taste never could tally;
The meadow is pleasant, enchanting the dale,
But a hill I prefer to a valley.

For prospect extended, and landscape most rare,
With health-breathing breezes inviting,
No daisy-pied mead with a hill can compare,
No garden yield sweets more delighting;

As a mole-heap's excell'd by a mound that's rais'd high,
As a street may exceed a small alley,
Even so to my mind, when these objects are nigh,
Is the hill I prefer to a valley.

But the hill of all hills, the most pleasing to me,
Is famed COTTON,* the pride of *North Devon*;
When it's summit I climb, O, I then seem to be
Just as if I approached nearer heaven!
When with troubles depress'd, to this hill I repair,
My spirits then instantly rally;
It was near this bless'd spot I first drew vital air,
So—a hill I prefer to a valley.

* Cotton Hill, near Barnstaple.

LETTER

TO

A YOUNG LADY.

Dear Madam,

I your mercy crave
For my poor namesake *John*, your slave,
Behold him abject at your feet;
Now is your triumph most complete:
A helpless victim see he lies,
Half slain by your all-conquering eyes!

Those eyes which like the mid-day sun,
None can with safety look upon.

To you (oh! take it in good part)
He gave the maid-hood of his heart,
Untouched by any former love;
Sure some compassion this might move;
His heart, which ne'er before was sway'd,
You like a cullender have made,
And 'less your power and mercy's equal,
Indeed, dear ma'am, I dread the sequel;
For love, beyond all other ills,
Despises juleps, drops, and pills.

If wedlock may be deemed a pleasure,
You can't too soon possess the treasure!
Consider then the loss of time,
And snatch the roses in their prime;

Teaze not the man who'll grace your house,
As a young cat torments a mouse:
Seeming regardless of the prize,
Puss slily turns aside her eyes;
But should he run—'tis all in vain,
For, snap! she brings him back again!
Again the panting wretch she mumbles,
Again she tosses him, and tumbles!—

But have you, madam, never seen,
When in the wall a hole hath been,
The pris'ner seize a lucky minute,
And in a trice hath slipp'd within it,
Leaving behind the tyrant puss,
To purr and claw and make a fuss?

Pardon, I pray, the facts I state,
Nor think I mean t' insinuate

Your captive *mouse* will run away,
And you the part of puss must play!
O, no such thing! what I fear most,
Is, that the mouse, thus plagued and tost,
Should by such usage be quite wasted,
Before one morsel has been tasted;
For what are all such tricks at last,
But schemes to heighten the repast?
Or what avails it thus to treat,
And take Him when there's nought to eat?
Rather than hazard such mishap,
Entice him kindly to the trap:
You won't, I trust, the thought disparage,
I mean, dear ma'am, the trap of marriage!
A trap, I'm sure he cann't withstand,
If you but lay the bait—your hand!

As I've his welfare much at heart,
Don't blame me that I take his part;
He my companion was, and chearful,
And not of any female fearful,
He joked at love, or seemed to doubt it,
And laughed at those who talk'd about it:
But hear him as a child now mutter;
Like one that's lost its bread and butter!
Since thoughts of you first filled his head,
His heart as heavy is as lead,
And if, dear ma'am, you do'nt befriend him,
Love's fatal power will surely end him.

But fearing this may be intrusion,
I'll bring my subject to conclusion,
Begging you will not mock his sighing,
And keep him thus whole years a dying!

'Whole years!'—Excuse my freely speaking,
Such torture, why a month—a week in?
Caress, or kill him quite in one day,
Obliging thus your servant,

JOHN GAY.

TO MY CHAIR.

Thou faithful vassal to my wayward will!
Thou patient midwife to my labouring skill!
My pen and ink's choice cell! my paper's pillow!
Thou steady friend, e'en were thy master mellow!
My seat!—I visit not the proud St. Stephen;
St. Stephen knows not *me*—so we are even.
A seat, obtained not by a threat or bribe;
But free, uninfluenced by an influenced tribe:
Thou'rt my inheritance—I boast no other;
My throne, *unique!* for thou hast not a brother.

Surrounded by my friends, secure from foes,
By thee upheld, I calmly seek repose.
Soothed by thy comfort, my ideas spread—
Aerial forms assemble round my head!
Titles and honors court me—in the air!
A proof that I've been *building castles* there!

Days, months, and years I've musing sat in thee,
And when grown pettish, thou ne'er answered'st me;
A quality this is, so rarely seen,
'Twould be a jewel might adorn a queen.

My study thou!—my favorite resting place!
My tabernacle where I pray for grace!
My spouse! for in thy arms I oft recline,
And hope, tho' pleased with progeny of thine,
That no base offspring ever may be mine.

THE

WORLD;

WITH

A POETICAL PARENTHESIS,

DEFINITION,

Marks, and *Re*-marks!

A TALE.

BY THE EDITOR.

Take note, take note, O World!
Othello.

Mark me!
I will. Hamlet.

THE

World.

The World's a Book!

And those who well peruse it,

'Its value know, and to advantage use it;

But those who o'er it lightly look,

Mistake its drift, and may their dulness thank;

The sense they so imperfectly digest,

The whole to them is but, at best,

A blank!

All who attentively the work unfold,
Will find it nearly what it was of old,
"A Book wherein we read strange matters,"
With many a moral precept and position;
And so 'twill be 'till that grand period when
Recording Time shall lay aside the pen,
Or Fate the mouldy volume tear to tatters,
Preparatory to a *new edition!*

The World a Book!—An age a *verse* then, say,—
(Tho' Poets don't affirm it, yet, we may;)
Common occurrences might be express'd
By *commas, semi-colons,* and the rest:
These points may even typify—(but now
We are not bound to say exactly how)
Life's changeful scenes from infancy;—till death,
That blunt *full stop,* intrudes, and—stops our breath.

This reasoning we might lengthen,
And strengthen,
If we chose;
By calling centuries *chapters* (verse or prose),
And add how lucky eras in relation,
Distinguish'd are by *notes of admiration!*
But the whole subject is a *tract* of mystery;
A *tome* voluminous of human history!
O'er Error's *dog-ear'd page* the student grieves,
And seeking truth, each day turns o'er—*New Leaves!*

Truth is not our's till Wisdom's rules decree it;
But few men know it, even when they see it.
It's semblance will, at times arise
In track unsound,
Just as an *Ignis Fatuus* may surprise
From swampy ground;
But Truth itself, whenever found,

Springs from a source that's pure; and tho' it fly
Swift as a trackless meteor thro' the sky,
It like the sun-beam gladdens every eye!

But here, tho' Truth we don't presuming give,
Yet all, who verse indite,
May show Truth's opposite,
And for elucida'on bid it live.

Critics, the most austere, admit of this,
E'en tho' the verse be expletive,
And mere

Poetical Parenthesis.

The sphere of Truth is so amazing,
We'll quit the track, just as we leave star gazing
To those who've optics for't,—
And turn to one of different sort.

Thus may a Doctor, in a dangerous case
Abate his customary rigour,
(For fear, perhaps, of cutting a poor figure)
And with profound and serious face
(His last prescription given)
Retire with grace,
Leaving the patient—to the care of heaven!—

Digressing from the point in view,
But still in search of what is true,
Tho' fearing failure in the disquisition;——
Accept of character some

Definition.

A man we'll sketch whom Truth will ne'er reject;—
A Village Pastor—worthy of respect:
One, haply known, as recognised by fame,
And much esteemed,—EMANUEL GLEBE his name;

Meek, patient, affable;—he lived, by rule,
A pleasing sample of the good old school:
Not like some modern prigs,—who, *sans* latinity,
Know more of *Dangleism* * than Divinity!
Nor one of those, who hunt on stylish back;
Or those, who in their frequent rounds
Know where the ready pack
Of cards (not hounds),
And famous sport,
Whim, pun, *bon mot*, and smart retort,
Convene a social meeting.

---

* It is presumed that this word *Langleism* will soon obtain its *proper place* in all *Fashionable Vocabularies!* The term is of some consequence—an important Modern-*ism*; and ought unquestionably to rank with, if not supersede, all the other *isms*, namely, *Macaroni-ism*, *Buckism*, and *Dandyism!!!*

The *game* in view, no matter how the chase,
And all its "hair-breadth 'scapes," take place,
So they but grace the greeting;
Nor do they care,
Or when, or where,
Hounds trace a hare,
So *they* but trace the treating;
Nor mind they aught,
Where sought,
Or chased, or caught,
So they are *in* at th' eating!—

The commentators now esteem'd
Of real worth (and by the *Greeks* so deem'd),
These critic sportsmen learnedly insist,
Are HOYLE and MATHEWS on the game of whist:
No aphorism there, or note, or comment,
But teems with matter of great "pith and moment!"

With classic groups, these *Sophs* till midnight sit,
On *points*, far more abstruse than points of wit!
In deep revolve their thoughts they ardent fix—
Seeking not Truth, but "*honors*" and "*odd tricks*!"

Odd *Tricks*, or *Tricking*, GLEBE would, smiling, own,
Comprised a science he had never known:
But Truth—he, with submission, thought,
The greatest "*honor*" man e'er sought:
Not that (he frequently would say)
He totally rejected play,—
But deem'd it time misspent, frivolity;
A check to cheerfulness and jollity;
It conversation damp'd, and wit's effulgence:
He rather would invoke
The flow of reason,—social mirth's indulgence,
Convivial chat,—a repartee, or joke!
And smiles that recogniz'd what Wisdom spoke.

As GLEBE grew warm, more florid were his looks,
More fluent and more flourishing his diction,
As some love eating, where they find good cooks,
So GLEBE loved arguing, till he found conviction.
Conviction he most aim'd at,—seldom miss'd it:
No thread of sophistry, but he'd untwist it:
No subtilty, but he'd a case to fit it:
And many a text,
That other students vex'd,
He would explain, or splice, where they had split it;
'Till his *quid est*, in disquisition (fine as
That of DUNS COTUS, or old TOM AQUINAS)
Would come full bolt at Truth, and, point-blank, hit it!

On any subject in debate,
GLEBE loved to ratiocinate.
With disputants (so versatile his powers,
And such his pertinacity)

He'd altercate for hours,
With wonderful loquacity,
And mould his metaphors to each capacity.

Nought gave EMANUEL GLEEE such high offence
As slight, or showing him indifference.

Discoursing in his ordinary way,
"*Observe!*" or "*Note!*" or "*Mark me well!*" he'd say.
Oft he'd familiar be, and oft verbose,—
As suited the condition of his flock;
One cup of ale would seal his lips up close,
But *two* would soon his ample jaws unlock!

It chanced, EMANUEL, mellowed at a christening,
His every feature with good humour glistening,—
A look that showed more pathos than profundity,
A genial, generous, jocund rubicundity!—

Hence, by the bye, we may be pretty sure that
GLEBE lived contentedly, tho' but a CURATE/

'Twas known,—and all the parish still declare,—
(Tho' in the parish records 'tis not stated!)
That GLEBE, on his first preaching there,
Was, in his person, and his wardrobe, spare.
Spare were his means,—they sparingly were rated;
And yet, tho' spare,
He had a gentlemanly, pleasing air,
And pleasing face, tho' somewhat angulated.

During the then fat Rector's days,
With sundry cares, GLEBE struggled sundry ways.
The Rector,—dear, good man! he struggled too;
And piously did all that man could do!
Not was it trivial struggling caused his grief;
In pain he struggled, struggled for relief!—

Of sublunary shadows well aware,
His hopes o'ercame the struggles of despair!
Staunch in his faith, he struggled not in doubt,
But, *martyr* like, he struggled with the *gout!*
His conflict was of real pain th'adjunct;
His twitchings (not of conscience!) were compunct;
His pangs were strong—spasmodically stout!
'Till plethora an l. dropsy drove 'em out,
And he became—defunct!

Five days the parish labour'd big, with grief!
The sixth, tho' mark'd for sorrow, brought relief!
The flambeaux flitted as the eve approach'd:
Then came the Rector *hears'd,*—the Curate *coach'd!*
Silence prevail'd—a puzzling pause ensued,—
Ah! who can number half the tears then brewed?
Not only brewed, but tapp'd, and drawn, no doubt;
The surest way of draining sorrow out!

Enough of sorrow.—Funeral forms are pass'd;
Grief, or the night, o'er all a gloom had cast,
But resignation, or the rising day,
Remov'd the gloom,—nor did the grieving stay!

At this sad crisis GLEBE was sore distress'd:
His feelings cann't be told,—they may be guess'd!
He lov'd his flock,—had held the *Cure* for years—
He wish'd no change:
And yet, however strange,
He deeply felt intruding doubts and fears:
But still, his fortitude and faith were such,
He for the Rector shed not *many* tears,
Nor grieved he—*overmuch!*

Beyond his present rank GLEBE raised no hopes,
Not even while he shivered at th' interment;
For he had studied rhetoric, and tropes;—

Had never sought,
Nor even thought
Of, patron or preferment.

Soon a new Rector came;—
His name,
Brookes; a man replete with knowledge.
(Could it be otherwise, when just from College?)

We'll pass o'er forms. Glebe was rejoiced at meeting
The new Incumbent's cordial greeting;
His manners polished were, and most benign;
Which instantly made Glebe opine
A change of system;—dealing less erroneous;—
In other words, less *parsimonious*.

Glebe felt released from many cares;—
Thought of his church,—how prosperous its affairs!

And, from the day that BROOKES was usher'd in,
GLEBE combated more manfully with sin!
For tho' he'd wrestled long, and hard,
Been on th' alert, and kept his guard,
Yet very oft he'd found
Himself most woefully aground;
But, thanks to his employer's kind assistance,
He now could keep the foe at greater distance!—
More influence had,—more consequence he carried,—
And Satan's buffets better parried!
In short, by annual computation's bounds,
He'd gain'd in wealth, and weight, full—FIFTY POUNDS!
Six years, or more, with stipend much improved,
By his parishioners esteem'd—beloved,
GLEBE happy lived; access to none denied,
Nor spar'd his good advice where wanted;
Truly benevolent,—unsway'd by pride,
His boons and blessings readily were granted.

The seventh summer, and—a letter came;
'Twas *frank'd*, and on the seal a *crest!*—
E'en it's exterior did some notice claim,
But it's *in*terior awe profound imprest!
Whence came it? say, nor fear rebuke—
Reader, thou canst not guess: 'Twas from a Duke!
Astonishing!—Don't lose thy breath:
Did it announce the worthy Rector's death?—
No!—'twas not that. GLEBE would have sigh'd,
And even grieved, had his good Rector died.
'Twas quite a different thing. BROOKES, high related,
(As his D.D. long since averr'd)
Had been, since his induction, twice *preferr'd*,
And now, as in the Duke's kind Letter stated,
Good *Doctor* BROOKES
Had,—like the best of books,—
Been (literally) *translated!*

Let Fortune smile, or ill betide,
(No matter how Fate crosses man)—
By either test the heart is tried :—
Brookes, now install'd *Diocesan*,
Thought of poor Glebe; whom he had long befriended,
And him, he now most strongly recommended.

The Duke—(a powerful patron)—yielded straight:
An obligation far beyond all pelf;
The way he did it, too, gave worth more weight;
He wrote himself!
The very Letter this of which we spoke;—
And 'tis no joke;
Nor shall the Tale be fractured or disjointed;
For Glebe was now—was what?—conjecture—
Was, by the Lord—(the Duke)—appointed
Rector!

After this period, it was whisper'd, pos.
That from improved resource and regularity,
'Twixt what GLEBE once had been, and what he was,
How wond'rous the disparity!
He stood—he walk'd—he rode—in weight, in store,
How much *per ann.*?—TWO HUNDRED POUNDS, or more!
Still, one horse carried him,—or mare, we'll say,—
This, by the bye, is wandering more astray:
'Tis galloping too far in explanation;
The rein we'll check, and jog on with narration.
If humour aptly flow,
Truth then may glow;
For Truth we'll bait, and, shunning Error's sharks,
Mark well the course, and make, of course,

Remarks.

Our worthy Pastor, GLEBE,—[we've told before
About a *Christening*, so of that no more,]—

Had of the gossip group just taken leave,
And home was trotting, on a summer's eve;—
In a lone lane, he check'd his old grey mare,
(No matter what it was he wanted there)
When BEN, a shepherd lad, stood loitering nigh,
And, at the moment, caught the parson's eye.
'Tis fitting here, perhaps, we mention,
BEN oft before had drawn attention,
By shrew'd reply, or simple witticism,
When GLEBE had walk'd,
Or with him talk'd
About his duties, or his catechism.
GLEBE lov'd to question all who understood;
And now, he aptly thought, his converse would
Elicit Truth, and do this boy some good.

Well BEN, said he, What are you at? asleep?
"No, zir, (said BEN) I've been a marking sheep."

Marking your sheep! for what, Ben? tell me how?
"Why, zir, d'ye zee, next week I drive the plough,
"And zo, for fear my flock should ramble far,
"Or leave their usual tracks,
"With this here mixture (ruddle, pitch, and tar)
"I make two broad long streaks across their backs."

Two streaks, d'ye say? why, wouldn't one large letter
The purpose answer, Ben, a good deal better?
And—(do you mind?) 'twould be most beneficial
If of your master's name you placed th' initial.

"The *nitial*, zir? what's *nitial*? like my stuff?—
"Like *ruddle*, zir?"—Pshaw, Ben; of this enough;
My using such a word
On this occasion, was absurd:
We'll now proceed awhile
In plainer style.

I'm happy, BEN, to find you're careful;
And yet, I'm fearful
You don't at times pay due regard;
Don't mark well what I say:
For instance,—'Tother day
I saw you, in the parsonage yard,
And call'd you near, where I was seated;
Did you well note th' advice I then repeated?—
"Can't zay I did;—you ask'd me, zir, to drink,
"Was zo good humour'd, too, (excuse my joking)
"A somehow, zir,—I didn't think
"Your Reverence was preaching, then, but smoking."

Well, BEN, know better for the future:—
Attend!—Consider *me* your guide, your tutor;
Your friend, your monitor, your coadjutor!
Take up your things,—get on that stile,
And mount behind;—'tis yet from home a mile;

We'll talk, as gently we jog on the way;
Do you, observant, mark whate'er I say:
For know, the truths that I display
Must not by boys, like you, be spurn'd,
Nor ever slighted, when my back is turn'd.
"Well, zir, (said BEN) I be main ignorant tho';
"And hardly understand my *Cris-cross row*;
"Yet, I'll not slight, zir, what I take in hand,
"But do as you, your Reverence, may command."

GLEBE thus began: BEN, you have oft been told
As there *are now*, there shepherds were of old:
ADAM himself, we might a shepherd call;
For he had flocks and herds, had care of all.
The truths I quote
We in the Bible note,
And further on, if we the page unfold—
Mark me, good lad!—"Yes, zir, if not too bold."

Well spoken, BEN; your modesty of thought
Shows a due deference for what is taught.

But, to proceed: CAIN was a wicked man;
Of gloomy mind,
Most cruel, and unkind:
But ABEL lived upon the shepherd plan;
D'ye mark me well? "As well, zir, as I can."
You know, BEN, CAIN was wrathful, struck his brother;
That stroke was bad: "Well, zir, I'll make another."
Another blow! you would not strike your kin?
"No, zir, I'd but another mark put in."
Mark, BEN? you mean the one on CAIN first placed:
The stamp of blood, by which he was disgraced;
But how that mark was fix'd it is not said,
It's form or colour. "Zir, the colour's red."
Well; BEN: it might be so; not badly guess'd;
Red is the type of blood, and so express'd;

But now, proceed we further,—
No longer we'll discourse of murther.

We'll speak of JACOB: thus the story runs—
"But pray, zir, pardon me, (said BEN)—
"Pray, was not JOSEPH, one of JACOB's sons,
"Sold as a slave to *Ismeelitish* men?"
Yes, boy, he was. "Ay, so I thought, d'ye see;
"But JACOB had a *younger* son than he."
He had; named BENJAMIN.—"It was not *I*."
No, no; we'll talk of *him*, BEN, bye and by:—
"Yes, zir, pray do; it always makes me cry;—
"It be zo *natural*, like: and then, each name—
"My brother JOE, at home, and *I*, the same:
"But *our* two names were father's choice, I know;
"And godmother would have it zo.
"'Tis odd, mayhap;—but, stay—
"As I was going, zir, to say,

"Young BENJAMIN, he took his brother's part;—
"And *I'd* have done the same with all my heart.
"Excuse me, zir; but when this tale I hear,
"I somehow feel *all overish* and queer!"
Good lad! It shows a soul of sensibility.—
"*Billy!* zir?—I can't make out
"What '*Billy-te-sense*' you talk about?"
A *sense*, BEN, of importance and utility—
One that will fertilize the mind's sterility.
But first, we'll speak of JACOB: mark me, now,—
"I do (said BEN); but let me tell you how
"I like this story: you so finely speak,
"I'd willingly keep marking you a week."
Good boy: but, BEN, now listen while I tell
A circumstance that JACOB's flock befel:—
He, with his uncle LABAN, had agreed
That when the ewes did breed,

Their lambs, if any *marks* they'd got,—
Were streak'd or pied,—should be as JACOB's lot:
So JACOB set peel'd wands before the rams,
And all the ewes yean'd parti-colour'd lambs.
Now, that which JACOB did,—such end in view,—
If such like wages, BEN, might be your due,
You could make *streaks*;—"Why, zir, and zo I do;
"Nor will I grumble at the pains I take:"
Hold, BEN; I fear you now some error make.
"I cannot help it, zir; the mare jolts zo,
"Some of my marks are queerish ones, I know."
Queer marks! *Re*marks, you mean; BEN; put in *Re*.
"Well, marks or *re*marks, zir, the same to me."
Why, yes, I own, BEN, your remarks are strange,
And don't exactly with my notions range:
"But when folks *see* the matter, plain and clear,—
"Lord, zir, the folks will see it, never fear!"

Observe me, BEN; you should reflective ponder
O'er all these things, for they excite our wonder.
"Sit still, zir, if you please, or I shall blunder."
Well, BEN, mere *blunder* can't offend,
If faithfully you mark the end.
"If they don't suit you, zir, my marks I'll mend"
Mend! what, *improve* yourself? well, BEN, then *do it;*
I won't the thought rebuff;—
That will suffice. "I'm glad, zir, I've got thro' it!
"I've had a tightish job on't, sure enough."

Thus, as the old grey mare pursued her trot,
Both chatted on, till nearly home they'd got.
E'en so, EMANUEL would have talk'd till dark:
And, at each sentence, would have said, BEN, mark!

Both now alighting at the parson's door,
Before you go, BEN, mark (said GLEBE) once more.

"I will (BEN answer'd),—if not marks enough;
"But stay, 'till I run home, and fetch more stuff:
"You see, I've scarcely any in my pan;
"Yet, zir, I will oblige you if I can;
"There's yet sufficient,—If you'll be so kind
"To turn your coat afore;
"For I have made so many marks behind,
"There's not a jot of room for one mark more."
Eh! what? (EMANUEL cried)—good Lord! good lack!
And have you, with your ruddle, mark'd my back?
No, no, it cannot be;
Yet, let me see—
Zounds! yes; 'tis absolutely so!
A pretty fellow with your *cris-cross row!*
Begone, you dunce! you blundering booby, go.

"Dear, dear!" BEN coolly said,
(And scratch'd his head)

"Why call me dunce, or scold me?
"I've only *mark'd* your Reverence, as you told me.
"Ize a poor lad, zir, of the parish stock,
"And *you* the faithful shepherd of the flock:
"I thought, d'ye see, when you did Scripture quote,
"In honour of those shepherds there of note,
"You'd like the *shepherd's mark* upon your coat!"
Pshaw, dunderhead! (exclaim'd the priest)—be mute!
You've by your marking spoil'd my Sunday suit!

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GOSSIP;

A TALE.

BY THE EDITOR.

Part I.

Gossip.

PART I.

Signs, Miracles have pass'd with days of yore;
Wonders have ceased, and Witchcraft is no more;
Gnomes and Horgoblins now no longer scare;
Sylphs, Fairies, Elves, have vanish'd into—air!
Ghosts, too, are gone, save those in shadowy veil,
Which stamp a moral, or "adorn a tale:"
Yet Spirits still stalk forth in blaze of day;
Spirits that feed on wo·th, on honor prey:·

Fierce, active SPIRITS, dangerously allied—
Prate, Envy, Scandal, Prejudice, and Pride!
These fiends, inversely, and in various ways,
Bloat by their breath, or wither by their praise;
Disfigure Truth, or taint a spotless name,
And riot on the mangled corse of Fame!

Pride can at times the meekest hearts inflate,
And soundest heads are influenced by Prate:
As Envy points, dark Scandal will impair,
And Prejudice pour all her poison there:
United, they mislead th' unwary mind,
And bias, indirectly, all mankind!

Report once raised, few question how 'twas brought,
Or whence its origin, or which way caught;
Or whether framed from envy, or from—nought!

Opinion too, is oft an empty word,
By Prate enforced,—by Reason proved absurd.
Few judge it's import, whether right or wrong;
It runs licentiously all ranks among,
Till 'tis so rife, it e'en the good confounds,
Who thence build structures on fallacious grounds.

As Upstarts, insignificant of birth,
Howe'er they soar, soon sink again to earth,
So many a thought would lose the credence gain'd,
Were it once known how weakly first obtain'd.

Dupe follows dupe—as 'tis with flocks of sheep,—
O'er Reason's fence incautiously they leap:
For fancied diet, or mere love of change,
By Error's tracks, how heedlessly they range!
Till all o'er Falsehood's fields at random stray,
As old bell-wether Custom leads the way.

A hydra-headed monster is the throng;
Brainless each sconce, tho' in each mouth a tongue:
Leviathan-like, in Folly's depths is hurl'd
This mighty Mammoth of a latter world!
Its motion like the undulating waves;
While Rumour's tide the wreck of Reason laves!

Report, tho' general, we should still mistrust;
For what is general, is not always just.
Malice is ever studious to deceive;
She prates to all who will her tale believe!
But cautious minds reject what Clamour rears,
Till freed of all the folly that adheres.

Th' observant Muse a thousand wrong might sing,
And woes describe, which from base sources spring;
One may suffice: 'twill mark, in humble life,
How Prate and Prejudice engender strife!

Read hapless Martha's fate:—The heart that's kind
Will glow with sympathy for injured mind:
A sympathy, that sweetly, unaware,
Charms the stray'd sense, and lulls each worldly care.

But Prejudice!—we'll trace this baneful wrong,
And note how it pervades the rustic throng;
Show how it gives dexterity in ill,
The harmless brute and bird to maim or kill.

Briefly we'll state how oft, on bare surmise,
Malice builds seeming-facts, or forges lies.

Where heedlessness, or vacancy, appears,
All-powerful Prejudice most domineers.
So lived the yeoman, Leasehold; harsh, or kind,
As Prate or Custom influenced his mind.

To brutes an ingrate, tho' they food supplied;
Tho' woollen clothed him, fur increased his pride:
A foe to insects;—why, he could not tell;
The bee he spared not,—robb'd the honied cell:
Not sun-born worms could this rude passion check,
E'en tho' their silky bounties 'dorn'd his neck:
His ire oft reach'd the fawn, the rabbit, mole,
Tho' use, or ornament, from each he stole:
If he the fox preserved, 'twas for the chase;
And often wore the brush as honor's grace.

His favorite horse he'd yield, without a sigh,
Whene'er a tempting dealer offer'd high:
The ass he'd shut without his hovel door
To browse on thistles, tho' man's God i bore!
Nay, his pet lamb, the type of all that's good,
For gain he'd sell—or shed himself its blood!

The kindlier bosom oft with pity glows,
Feeling for man how numerous others' woes!
For his caprice, pride, pleasure, or supply,
How many creatures labour, suffer, die!
But LEASEHOLD reck'd not this; nor e'er felt pain
To have his wethers, hogs, and heifers slain;
He coolly view'd, torn from the plough or stall,
The ox that with him toil'd, by slaughter fall.

With sportsman eye, he'd mark, e'en while he work'd,
Whence sprung the partridge,—where the pheasant lurk'd;
When leisure served, he'd shoot with steady aim:—
Wing death to many,—but still more would maim:
His generous steed he'd goad o'er fallow grounds,
And, after, mount him at the cry of hounds.
The stag he'd rouse, by pack infuriate sought,—
By man pursued with eagerness—till caught.

An exercise long famed!—Let men of sense,
By taste thus led, with cruelties dispense:
Nor urge the sumptuous Epicurean feast;
Health is the best result, and sport the least.

Ah, when shall man to pristine practice dare—
Revert to simple vegetable fare?
With sounder frame, a healthier mind maintain,
And patriarchal age and strength regain?

'Tis rare indeed that precept's force can move
Those rooted habits Custom's laws approve:
Yet Custom has its good along with ill;
And Prejudice can spare, as well as kill:
Hence, LEASEHOLD would his spaniel's fondness court,
Yet harass timid hares, and call it sport!
Tho' he'd destroy the half-fledged sparrow's nest,
He'd warm the houseless robin at his breast!

Would shelter it from wintry storm and flood,
Nay, call it heav'ns own bird, and give it food!

Yes; thus as Custom wrought, would LEASEHOLD be
To feeling prone, or cased in apathy.
His neighbour GOODLAND too, an honest man,
Lived, thought, and acted, on the self-same plan;
By nature hospitable, frank, and kind,
Till Prate and Prejudice transform'd his mind.

The farm that GOODLAND held adjoin'd a town
Where dwelt Miss GREY, and Mistress ANNA BROWN:
Two sisters;—worthy, save some shades of pride;
GOODLAND's relations, by the mother's side;
Both felt an interest in his household cares,
And gave advice in family affairs.
For could a widower, tho' by prudence ruled,
Know how a daughter should be rear'd, or school'd?

And MARTHA, whom to see was to admire,
Obedient bow'd to them as to her sire.

Miss ALICE GREY had seen the world,—its fashions;
Its wants she'd felt not; scarcely own'd its passions:
But ANNA never far from home had been,
And 'yond the parish church was seldom seen.
ALICE had known so much—she single tarried;
But ANNA little knew—and *therefore* married!
(Consistent this; tho' passion oft decrees
Different results from the same premises.)

ANN loved her lord while living, yet was she
Never as dames "who love their lords" would be.
Her husband early died, and thus, bereft,
No friends, save GOODLAND and her sister, left
She both esteem'd; but years had pass'd away,
When home came ALICE (as she went out)—GREY

No other change, save that the eye might trace
Some wrinkling signs of wisdom in her face!

Ah, why should wisdom's worth entail a curse,
And, while it betters heads, make faces worse?
ANNA, in manner, was the most commanding,
But ALICE bore the palm for understanding.

Tho' one had seen the world, the other not;
Yet both had similar *signs of wisdom* got!—
Their minds—opinions, nearly on a par;—
But ALICE GREY,—altho' she'd travell'd far,
Beyond her nose had very seldom look'd,
While ANN knew nought of life but what was book'd:
Believing what she read, she thought it good:
And ALICE, who so little understood,—
At least, such superficial knowledge had,
From what she knew, concluded all were bad!

London she'd picture as a place most vile,
And yet affect its modes of taste, and style.
At country life would sneer,—deride its ways,—
Yet ape its foibles, and its follies praise.
Both sisters might thro' different mediums see,
But, in the main, would rarely disagree.

ANNA was oft admir'd by men of taste,—
She all her sex excell'd—in making paste!
Her cake and tarts, so frosted and embellish'd!
And then her custards every body relish'd!

No epicure e'er at a table carved,
But priz'd whate'er she pickled or preserved;
In these nice points none ANNA could out hine;—
Her sipping guests extolled her currant wine!
It was delicious, and of brilliant hue—
One glass seem'd exquisite,—but what were *two*?

ALICE was famed for finely flavour'd tea,
Green, Hyson, Gunpowder, Souchong, Bohea;
And, at a *pinch*, could sport the best Rappee!
Select their parties,—*tonish* their regards;
Conspicuous each at compliments and cards!
Great nobleness of mind by both was shown,—
A partner's good considered as their own!
Alive to all the *rubs* that others feel,
They seldom lost a trick, or miss'd a deal!

With ANN and ALICE frequent might be seen
Their crony friends, Miss BLACK, Miss BLUE, Miss GREEN.

Whenever two of these the party miss'd,
DUMMY supplied the vacant hand at whist.
Or say, that GOODLAND came, and LEASEHOLD too,
The whole made up, with PAM, a game at loo!

All hated scandal, tho' they lent their ears!
Gave whispers breath, and sanctioned them by sneers!
Expert at looks and nods,—their chit-chat mirth,
By inuendoes, oft, gave rumour birth,
Or moulded facts, as fancy fashion'd harm;
For tittle-tattle held with them a charm
That could with wit, and Reason's laws, dispense,
While pure "no meaning" held the place of sense!
It varnish'd visitings,—gave tea a zest,
As steam'd its curly fragrance round each guest.

'Twas *stylish* deem'd, when cake, or tea, was brought,
To rattle on, without the aid of thought!
Then *How-d'ye-do's*, of *Hope-you're-well's* took place,
And *Glad-to-see-you's*, gave first greetings grace!
Some scores of questions that no answers wanted;
Bare hints, and mere surmises, ta'en for granted.

With many a shrewd remark, and sapient shrug,
Relieved by *Poll's* apt prate, or play with *Pug!*
But pugs and parrots in their noise are slack,
Compared, sometimes, with gossipping click clack!
Nor does the dear delusion soon run out—
It serves the meagre meal—the huddled rout—
The crouded card room, and the "*Tea-turn-out!*"

These, and some other characters like these,
Composed the scene and its varieties.

Of solid judgment small, the stock their own;
As Custom's vane turn'd round they all were blown.
Their minds mere *blanks*,—like paper in the ream,—
This might *full crown*, and that might *foolscap* seem;
Thrown on life's shelf, some no impression got;
Some cobwebb'd over, and others all a blot;

Of truth, or *un*-truth, all alike impress'd,
Th' opinion *one* obtain'd, served all the rest;
And that most prevalent with them, was best!

Alike the text, the comment, and the note;
By reading one, you might the other quote;
The same the meaning, but in different light,
For *Green* was *Brown*,—and *Grey*, at times, was *White*!
Some vague,—and some confused by wild digression;
Some, bungling copies of a bad impression:
Others that would a printer's art degrade,
As seeming only for waste paper made;
Rough outside quires,—*pot*, *cap*, thick *post*, or *crown*,
No one distinct idea e'er set down—
All tinted—*Grey*, or *Green*,—or *Black*, or *Blue*, or *Brown*!

In such a circle, it can ne'er surprise
If strange mistakes and vile distortions rise;

If Folly's clouds, expanding various ways,
By strong refraction warp Truth's brilliant rays.

But 'mid these characters were still a few
Who falsehood hated,—honor'd what was true.

Near GOODLAND'S farm lived GRANGE,—of liberal mould;
Less warm in wealth, but with a heart less cold;
The Village Tutor; those who wanted one
Would ask for GRANGE,—not *Mister*, but plain JOHN.
Time had left JOHN good sense,—(no jot of pride,)—
Humour, and honesty,—no wealth beside.
During his time, GRANGE had seen better days,
And many worse experienced, many ways:
Bred a rich yeoman's son; but dissipation
Had ruin'd him; it ruins half the nation.
While yet a boy, by blind indulgence spoil'd,
He'd sport, or loiter, while his father toil'd:

The good old man, altho' with coffers stored,
His own sad lack of *larning* oft deplored;
He therefore vow'd, and frequent o'er his wine,
That JACK, his son, should a great *scholard* shine!
To read and cypher now the boy was sent;—
Got on as far as village teacher went;
Read very well,—(save aspirating *I*—
Broad dialect, loud twang, and *ti tum ti!*
A plodding, grave, good boy; he loved his book;
Would every sabbath in his bible look;
Pore o'er each page of scriptural narrations,
And thumb from *Genesis* to *Revelations!*
Knew well each name—*Ahab* to *Zedekiah;*—
Could the tenth chapter read of *Nchemiah!*
Yes, off-hand read it! without stop, or stumbling;
Each *collect* got by heart,—and without grumbling!
At spelling long hard words he'd frequent boast,—
But 'twas in cyphering JACK excell'd the most!

He did not stand at simple rule of three,—
Through practice went—to trigonometry!
He mensuration,—fluxions, learnt, to boot;
Each cubic branch;—well grounded in square root!
At algebra he had a happy knack,—
In short, so great a prodigy was JACK,
'Twas thought he e'en could make an almanack!
The father, poor old man, his race near run,
Wonder'd, and wept for joy o'er JACK his son!
Bless'd his good stars for such a treasure given;
Fell sick—contented died—and went to heaven!

Scarce was he gone, when JACK, withdrawn from school,
Began to ape the man,—and play the fool!
Restraint shook off—resolved from home to go forth,—
Commenced fine gentleman—the rake—and so forth!
Suppose the rest: when things get worse and worse,
Ruin ensues; it must; it comes of course.

Yet, after all, JACK had a feeling heart;
With what he got would gaily, freely, part;
But indiscriminate his gift or treat;
The same to him whoe'er he chanced to meet:
Of course, the undeserving most obtain'd;
Worth kept aloof, ne'er sought, and little gain'd.
This conduct raised companions, but no friend;
Till all JACK's cash and squandering, had an end.

Years pass'd along; to motley means applied,
JACK various callings and professions tried:
Constant to none; but, ruled alone by whim,
He soon left trade, or trade, as soon, left him.
At length a friend rose up; and one of note;
One whom his sire had served by county vote:
An obligation now no longer due;
For JACK had lost his vote, and freehold too.

This friend, to whom poor JACK in need paid court,
Got him a gauging-stick, for life's support!
Viz.—An Exciseman's walk; and near the coast;
The scourge of smugglers, dread of many a host;
Wonder of gaping swains, and clod turmoilers;
Terror of maltsters, chandlers, and soap-boilers!
But this employ soon tired; and prone to range,
Long as he could, JACK still indulged in change.
Forty he'd reach'd;—with changes many a score;
He married—and *one* change, at least, was o'er!
Now more recluse he lived, and kept, by *rule*,
One wife—one cow—six children, and a school!
Each morn at early hour he musing walk'd:
Each night at ten, he smoked his pipe and talk'd.

GRANGE shun'd all Gossips, or their prate reproved;
But vicious habits are not soon removed;

No influence had he beyond good sense;
With them opinion's worth,—was weight of *pence.*
Whoe'er was rich was thought in judgment right:
Whoe'er was poor, was, in importance, light.
It cannot then surprise, if reason fail'd,
That prejudice, at times, o'er truth prevail'd,
And deep distress ensued:—The sequel hear;
Let Rancour blush, and Pity drop a tear.

END OF PART I.

GOSSIP.

Part II

Gossip.

PART II.

Goodland his daughter loved: sweet flower of May;
Unlike the vain exotics of the day,
That idly wanton in their summer sky,
Rise but to glare, to flutter, fade, and die:
Of native sweetness she—of beauty rare;
As eve serene, and as the morning fair:
A rose, while blooming, doom'd to feel love's blight,
Ere well its perfume gave the world delight.

No village swain but held sweet MARTHA dear;
And maids and matrons still her name revere!
Had she a fault?—She loved!—Was that a crime?
Reason is silent; Prudence points at time;
Ill-nature, prying, skulks;—while scowling Fame
Brands on the brow of beauty lasting shame!

'Tis hard!—distressing!—piteous hard indeed!
When bare surmise robs Virtue of its meed!
'Tis harder still, while treading Virtue's path,
That conscious worth should meet parental wrath!

MARTHA was seen—admired! a neighbouring youth,
A soldier, woed her smile, and vow'd his truth.
His gorget,—sash,—smart air, in crested pride,
Her notice caught; she look'd, she listen'd—sigh'd.
Her father, too, from false, ambitious aim,
Wish'd the alliance,—fann'd the glimmering flame!

Why censure then his child, who, void of guile,
Obey'd the dictates of his fostering smile?
Such bias might to Virtue's self appeal,—
But who appreciate?—those alone who feel.

O Love, pure love! thou influence benign!
Essence of joy!—and type of bliss divine!
Electric impulse!—spark with brilliance fraught!
The glow refined—anterior e'en to thought!
Refulgent light, that youth's blest zone supplies!
The meteor-radiance of life's polar skies!
Not RAPHAEL's tint, nor OVID's tuneful art,
Speak half the meaning lovers' eyes impart—
Love's best resolves the looks alone control,—
The genuine, living, language of the soul!

But how to bonds of love are hearts consign'd?
And what *is* love? how form'd? and how defined?

By mute attentions—or the frequent sigh—
By hopes and doubts—the mind unconscious why.
By slow advances gain'd with graceful ease,—
And soft denials, which, receding, please:
By assiduities—by kind intent—
Anticipation of reserved consent:
By faultering speech—its meaning scarcely guess'd,
And implications—not to be express'd:
By fears that chill, and wishes half reveal'd
In mark'd anxieties to be conceal'd:
By thoughts, words, actions, valueless apart,
But *all* of worth; and from one source—the heart!

Thus sensibility illusion cheers,
Till Love a blissful superstructure rears.

Such were the signs that CHARLES's thoughts display'd,
And such sweet MARTHA's sympathies betray'd.

MARTHA he sought as happy chance enforced;
The tongue was fetter'd—but the eye discoursed;
Aspirings soften'd, as their fears disarm'd;
Each imperceptibly the other charm'd;
Silence retain'd what frequency matured,
And soft confession, confidence secured.

Joyous their prospects!—Blest with health and youth,
They breath'd, in mutual vows, eternal truth:
Awhile obliged to part—they bade adieu,—
Pleased with the vision fancy held in view.

CHARLES as an Ensign only, yet was known,
Youth—spirit—and ingenuous mind his own:
He'd at his lodgings pass the day—the week—
Content with simple cutlet, chop, or steak.
Unless when duty call'd, he'd seldom roam;
Nor half so happy seem'd as when at home:

But if at mess the charms of wine inspired,
He took his sober pint, and then retired.

A *sub* Lieutenant CHARLES some months remain'd,
And soon, by rank, a company obtain'd:
His mind, with change of rank, assumed more sway,
And tho' not profligate, he grew more gay!

If e'er *inconstancy* full power possess'd,
Marking one set of men above the rest,
'Tis doubtless here; for should, tho' unaware,
A youth indulge a sigh for some lov'd fair,—
For *one alone!*—he's ridiculed, or jeer'd,
And wean'd from habits he has long revered:
Love soon extinguish'd is—or 'tis restrain'd,
And he becomes the rake, at first but feign'd.
'Twas thus with CHARLES: the frivolous, they smiled,
His vows of honest passion oft reviled;

Whene'er he sigh'd, or whisper'd MARTHA's name,
Their jests they'd sport,—" A *farmer's daughter!* shame!
" Toast her with *others* and her health we'll quaff,—
" But when you're serious, CHARLES,—we needs must laugh.
" Think what the *honor* to be thus allied!—
" Zounds, man! look higher,—have a soldier's pride!"
Here's prate! here's prejudice! for shame recoils;
It rests not on the head of him who toils.
'Tis strange that custom e'er should deem as low
That labour whence earth's greatest blessings flow!
A different feeling soon will sway mankind,
As Reason's dictates more expand the mind.

But CHARLES—his letters, tho' they seem'd sincere,
Now much less frequent came,—less fervent were:
Long intervals of sad suspense were pass'd—
Till total silence every hope o'ercast!

Silence that fill'd poor MARTHA's soul with dread:
She wonder'd,—wept,—and fear'd her CHARLES was dead!
Impatient, rash,—(who is not rash in youth?)
Her home she left—to ascertain the truth:
From this sad step,—and why, events will show,—
Poor MARTHA dated all her future woe.

The depôt now she sought—a toilsome way;
And traced the spot where CHARLES' detachment lay:
With ardent thought, on light'ning's wings she flew,
And found her CHARLES;—was it the same she knew?
Ah, no!—the rose had fled his cheek—'twas wan—
His looks were changed—he seem'd another man!
Wild dissipation had, by subtle stealth,
Blear'd o'er the open honesty of health:
But change of person had not changed her will,
Had he an Ethiop been—she'd loved him still!

On MARTHA's face a heavenly sweetness beam'd,
But CHARLES—in great surprise—embarrass'd seem'd!
Joy he assumed; but, ah, it was too plain,
Her visit, unexpected, gave him pain.

Unlike was this the meetings once they'd known,
When each to each most anxiously had flown!
And so, on MARTHA's part, the meeting now;
But not on his—he wore deception's brow.

His silence noting, she the reason ask'd,
And soon, too soon, his falsehood shone unmask'd!
"*Martha!*" he faultering spoke—"why hither come?
"Excuse me, love—Parade!—I hear the drum;
"Don't be uneasy—a Review next week—
"You'll stay, of course—ere that, I'll further speak:
"Upon my *honor*, you shall find me true;
"But your romantic notions, child, won't do!

"Here, all is different—yet, no *harm*, depend—
"And '*pon my honor*, child,—I'll be your *friend!*"
'My friend! Ah, CHARLES!—what only FRIEND? no love?'
"Pshaw! you mistake;—your doubts I'll soon remove;—
"Observe me, child,—by *friend*—I mean the same,—
"That is,—the difference—only—in the name;—
"With *us*, love's little talk'd of,—friendship more;
"Love,—simple, silly love, is styled—a *bore!*"

By such vague phrases, which his pride had reared,
CHARLES scoff'd the virtue that he once revered.

Shame on the wretch, who, foe to womankind,
Assails the holy temple of the mind;
Who, by dark sophistry's insidious toil,
Would undermine the fabric he'd despoil!
Could CHARLES act thus? fair Virtue's shrine profane?
No!—'twas some fiend—'twas madness fired his brain!

MARTHA affrighted stood! CHARLES trembled—blush'd—
And, in confusion, from her presence rush'd!——
In whirlwind haste, as MARTHA homeward turn'd,
Conflicting passions in her bosom burn'd.

Can woes,—can wrongs like her's be e'er defined?
Can language paint the anguish of the mind?
Alas! she's doom'd to feel one ang ish more—
Against the child the father shuts his door!

In MARTHA's absence, Prate, by Scandal wrought,
Had named her, with impurity of thought!
Her father, hasty, credulously weak,
Heard Scandal's tale. What will not Scandal speak?
MARTHA's dejected mein—her sighs—her tears
Increased the father's doubts, confirm'd his fears;
His child—his once loved child, is forced away,
To seek a shelter—where, and how she may!

Her *friends* (the GREYS and BROWNS) all turn'd aside,—
And thus, what falsehood reared, they fed by pride.
One Mrs. TIMID check'd the village spite;
But could not—(*prudently*)—say all was right!

GRANGE, and his wife, took hapless MARTHA's part;
Her worth maintain'd—her innocence of heart.
This, 'mong the Gossips, raised a furious din:
The GREYS and BROWNS exclaim'd, 'Twas shame, 'twas sin!
Unpardonable!—done with vile intent!
'Twas giving thoughtless girls encouragement!
'Twas holding up the daughter 'gainst her sire!
It was——in short, it set the place on fire!

What could GRANGE do?—it almost made him swear!
The neighbours took their children from his care!
But this he brav'd! As MARTHA's steady friend,
[illegible]—but he'd her cause defend.

Alas! when o'er the deep the tempest raves,
'Tis not one drop of oil can smooth the waves:
And what's a single voice?—its efforts vain;
A zephyr's breath to stem a hurricane!

Can this be just? Shall Prate, shall Gossip Fame,
Thus rob the artless of their virtuous name?
Say, MARTHA was incautious—wrong her flight;
Her judgment only err'd; her heart was right:
Pure was her bosom as the vernal morn;
Chaste as the lucid drop that studs the thorn!
She e'en the shadow of reproach could clear;—
Of what avail? her father would not hear!
Not listen to a child?—unkind—unjust!
Conscience may since have smote him!—*may*?—it must!

In tears, in grief absorbed; in deep dismay,
Poor MARTHA shunn'd the world, and shunn'd the day.

From home, from father, friends, and kindred driven,
Her only hope, and consolation—heaven.

Of all the ills entail'd on life's estate,
Our nature's lot, inheritance, and fate,
None hold such feudal, absolute control,—
None take such root, so deeply wound the soul,
As when the parent's province is abused,
And e'en th' indulgence of reply refused.
To think that where the tortured mind would gain
A sanctuary,—a release from pain,
Repulse should come!—e'en from that blest abode,
Where the first buds of sweet affection blow'd:
That he, the prop, the guardian shield from woes,
Should join, misguidedly, a herd of foes,
Dead to the influence of prospective fears,
To Sorrow's plaints, and penitential tears!

The heart thus wrung, and thus denied relief,
Has no resource, no succour left—but grief:
And grief but limited degrees can bear;
When urged too far, it then becomes despair.

So it occurr'd. Scandal, confess thy shame,
And own the injuries of ruin'd fame!
Ruin'd by thee, and those to thee allied—
Spleen, Malice, Envy, Ignorance, and Pride.

Brief what remains of wretched MARTHA's fate:
Language can never woes like her's relate.

She journey'd far, yet found no friendly door;
In silence sorrow'd—she could weep no more!
Her eye-balls oft with frenzied fires would glare—
Her agonizing screams oft rend the air!

A *maniac* wild, she sought her devious way,
Chanting some love lorn, incoherent lay!
Around her head fantastic wreaths she'd bind,
While 'mong her tresses sweetbriar roses twined!
Would smile, if chance the thorn empierced a vein,—
It sooth'd, or seem'd to sooth, her mental pain.

A wandering sufferer through the dreary night,—
Watching the moon, she'd blame its changeful light:
The meteor's track would mark; its transient ray;
Lament the fleeting clouds, the breaking day;
Weep when she saw the ever-varying hues,
As bright Aurora chased the glistening dews!
With birds she would commune; then pause, and sigh
"Inconstant birds!—ah, wherefore from me fly?"
Oft with the dove she'd moan; or start with fear,
Whenever gaudy insects flutter'd near!

She'd chide the humming bee, that ranged the fields,
"Why quit so soon the flower that treasure yields?
"Why, busy trifler, why, intent on change,
"Wilt thou from sweet to sweet for ever range?"

Like the meek lamb, from fold and flock when torn,
Far from its kind,—lost, abject, and forlorn,
MARTHA long roved—forsaking, and forsook—
Her food, wild berries, and her drink, the brook!
Houseless, exposed, 'mid elemental strife,
While hectic fires consumed the source of life,
Her fever'd vital powers could scarce sustain
The throb that struggled at the seat of pain.
Yet when disorder'd thought her senses press'd,
Her weakened nerves a maddening strength possess'd.

On the bleak rock that mark'd the frowning shore,
While thunders join'd the waves' incessant roar,

While gathering clouds, their light'nings broke asku
Streaming electric flame through heaven's expanse,
MARTHA delirious strayed—and, drooping low,
Sunk 'neath the weight of aggravated woe:
A deathy hue, her lip—her cheek o'ercast—
Tow'rds heaven her eyes she raised—and breath'd her last

In deep regret fond memory fain would dwell,
While village maids poor MARTHA's woes re-tell.
GOODLAND, her parent, long, too long deceived,
Repents that gossip prate he e'er believed.
He mourns his daughter lost—her memory loves,
And oft his past severity reproves.
Those who most vilified her spotless fame,
Like culprits stand—confused—o'erwhelm'd with shame.
The BROWNS, the GREYS, the GREENS perceive, too late,
The [illegible] effects of envy, pride, and hate.

GRANGE, and he only, feels the honest pride
f having all their baneful arts defied.
'e taunts their wailings, fruitlessly expres'd:
oo late is MARTHA's virtuous worth confess'd!
'ain now their sorrowings for her numerous wrongs—
IARTHA, the victim of envenom'd tongues.
'lear as the day, her innocence appears;
'right as heaven's bow, but midst a shower of tears!

FINIS.

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ERRATA.

Page	*Line*	
115	5	Tho' *Anna* had an air the most commanding, *Alice* the most presumed at understanding.
119	5	And so the dear delusion veers about.
—	10	Omit the comma after "small."
138	13	Read—Or by dark sophistry's insidious toil.

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